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Not Competent but Warm . . . Really? Compensatory Stereotypes in the French-speaking World

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Two studies examined the compensation hypothesis that members of both high- and low-status groups associate high-status groups with high levels of competence and low levels of warmth on the one hand, and low-status groups with low levels of competence and high levels of warmth, on the other. Building upon existing linguistic relations between the French and the Belgians, Study 1 had standard, i.e. French, and non-standard, i.e. Belgian, speakers rate the linguistic skills, competence, and warmth of both groups and report their meta-stereotypes. As predicted, both groups of participants saw the French as more skilled linguistically than Belgians and evaluated standard speakers as more competent than warm and non-standard speakers as more warm than competent. This pattern also emerged in respondents' meta-stereotypes. Study 2 revealed that compensation was less marked among a third group of Francophone speakers, i.e. Swiss, even if the latter respondents seemed well aware of the pattern guiding Belgian and French representations of each other. We discuss the implications of the findings in terms of motivated intergroup stereotypes.

KEYWORDS ambivalence, compensation hypothesis, ethnolinguistic identity theory, meta-stereotypes, standard versus non-standard speakers, stereotype content model, stereotypes

LANGUAGE is of utmost importance when it comes to the way people define their group identity (Giles, 1979; Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977). Accordingly, linguistic practices and the various representations associated with them received a fair amount of attention from social psychologists interested in intergroup relations. A productive line of research examined people's attitudes about individuals speaking standard or non-standard linguistic varieties (Bradac, Cargile, & Hallett, 2001; Ryan & Giles, 1982). This work relied heavily on the matched guise technique in which participants evaluate personal qualities of speakers on the basis of

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audio excerpts. Although by no means ubiquitous (Giles & Coupland, 1991; Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner, & Fillenbaum, 1960), the typical finding reveals that, when using a non-standard variety, the speaker is attributed negative characteristics as far as status and competence are concerned but positive characteristics when it comes to solidarity and warmth. The opposite pattern emerges when the same speaker uses a standard variety (see Edwards, 1982; Ryan, 1979).

Social scientists have traditionally built on both Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and Ethnolinguistic Identity Theory (ELIT; see Giles & Coupland, 1991) to account for these findings. According to ELIT, the standard linguistic variety enjoys a great deal of institutional support. As a result, standard speakers are credited with more prestige and competence than non-standard speakers. From the perspective of the members of the low-status group (and/or low-vitality group), however, the positive views attached to the high-status members entail a devaluation of their group and the self-regard of low-status members suffers from the comparison. This situation leads members of the low-status group to find a dimension on which positive differentiation can be achieved. Warmth, which is thought to be largely independent of competence (e.g. Rosenberg & Sedlak, 1972) offers a means to restore some degree of positive social comparison. Members of the high-status group on the other hand would be ready to concede superiority to the members of the low-status group in the social domain insofar as their own position is being guaranteed in the competence domain. Both standard and non-standard speakers would be satisfied with the situation to the extent that all parties involved find a way to achieve a decent level of positivity on some dimension while admitting to being outperformed by the outgroup on another dimension (Mummendey & Schreiber, 1983). From the perspective of ELIT and SIT, what we call a *compensation* pattern in the characterizations of the speakers can best be seen as a form of social creativity.

Interestingly, recent work conducted under the banner of the Stereotype Content Model (SCM; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Fiske, Xu, Cuddy, & Glick, 1999) is highly reminiscent of early reports of compensation in the social psychology of language. In a series of studies, Fiske and her colleagues reported evidence for ambivalence and showed that high-status groups (e.g. Jews, rich people, Black professionals) are more readily described in terms of competence than warmth whereas the reverse applies for low-status groups (e.g. housewives, welfare recipients). Similar ambivalent views seem to hold for national or broad regional stereotypes (Phalet & Poppe, 1997). For instance, people in the Northern hemisphere have been found to associate Northerners with hard-heartedness and egocentrism but high levels of ability and power, whereas Southerners are seen in terms of laziness and weakness but rank high on hospitality and emotionality (Levine & Campbell, 1972; Pennebaker, Rimé, & Blankenship, 1996).

From individual speakers to group stereotypes

The matched guised technique provided preliminary support for the compensation pattern on *interpersonal judgments related to linguistic performance*. In comparison, stereotype content studies relied on *judgments about groups unrelated to the linguistic domain*. The first aim of the present research was to fill the gap between these two strands of research, namely ELIT and SCM, by examining the way people associate competence and warmth to groups in relation to the linguistic practices which they think are prevalent among these groups.

A full-crossed design

A second ambition of the present research was to address the compensation pattern in group judgments as predicted by SCM in the context of a full-crossed design. The distinct feature of this design is that the members of both a low- and a high-status group provide judgments about their own group members (endo-stereotypes) as well as judgments about the members of the other group (exo-stereotypes), making it possible to tease apart target and

judge effects in the judgments of low- and high-status groups on competence and warmth (Lambert, Anisfeld, & Yeni-Komshian, 1965; Lambert et al., 1960). In particular, this design should reveal whether members of low- and high-status groups agree with respect to their representations of the characteristics of these two groups. Building on ELIT and the SCM, we would predict that *both* high- and low-status members associate the high-status group more readily with competence and the low-status group more readily with warmth (see also Social Dominance Theory, Sidanius & Pratto, 1999, and System Justification Theory, Jost & Banaji, 1994; Jost & Hunyady, 2002).[1]

Meta-stereotypes

As a third goal of the present research, we also assessed participants' *meta-stereotypes*. That is, in addition to asking members of a high- and a low-status group to convey their impressions about the members of these high- and low-status groups (i.e. stereotyping in the context of a full-crossed design), we also invited members of both groups to report how they thought their group was being perceived by the other group. Note that these judgments have never been collected in the context of the matched guise technique. Recent developments in the study of intergroup relations suggest, however, that meta-stereotypes impact on group members' self-esteem and emotions. People's impression that their group is being negatively evaluated by the outgroup is associated with lower self-esteem and with negative emotions (e.g. Vorauer, Main, & O'Connell, 1998). In the present research, we were interested in estimating the degree of concordance between the way people perceive the members of their own group and how they think the members of the other group perceive them. The use of meta-stereotype measures also allowed us to examine compensation at yet another and heretofore unexplored level. Indeed, a fascinating issue is whether compensation tendencies depend on the way people think they are being evaluated by outgroup members, and whether this trend, if any, is found to be stronger among members of a low-status group.

Motivated compensation

One key issue regarding compensation is the extent to which the views professed by the members of the two groups with respect to each other reflect some motivation on their part to make the best of the intergroup situation and maintain harmony in their relations by promoting their group's standing on at least one dimension. Admittedly, any intervention of group-enhancement or otherwise motivated justification of the social hierarchy would be reflected in the fact that the compensation pattern found among insiders, i.e. people who are directly involved in the comparison, is stronger than the one found among outsiders, i.e. people who are outsiders to the comparative context. A fourth objective of the present research was therefore to compare the strength of the compensation pattern found among insiders of a comparative context with the views expressed by outsiders.

Overview of the studies

Two studies were conducted to examine the above issues. In Study 1, we examined the linguistic skills, competence, and warmth attributed to Belgian and French speakers of French. Our methodology involved having respondents of both linguistic groups communicate ingroup and outgroup judgments. We also looked at meta-stereotypes within both linguistic groups. In Study 2, we asked a third group of respondents to report their impressions about the members of the high- and low-status group as well as their judgments regarding these group members' respective meta-stereotypes. If representations from these outsiders fail to match those held by insiders, this would suggest a fair degree of motivation in the perception of these groups by those involved in the intergroup relations.

Study 1

Study 1 relied on the situation of the French-speaking world (see Bourhis, 1982). The standard variety in French primarily refers to the

Paris-based bourgeoisie accent and lexicon (high-status). This variety is usually perceived as the norm in French, meaning the 'good French'. Usually, other French-speakers are seen as low-prestige speakers. Among the former are such communities as Canadians, Swiss, Africans, or Belgians. Whatever the actual linguistic performances of these groups (see Blampain, Goosse, Klinkenberg, & Wilmet, 1997; Lafontaine, 1991; PISA 2000, 2002), evidence suggests that French-speaking Belgians belong to a long-standing stigmatized speech community. Sociolinguistic studies indicate that Belgians foster negative attitudes toward the linguistic practices of the ingroup members (see Francard, 1999). Belgians also show a decreased performance in French in stereotype-threat contexts (Provost, Yzerbyt, Corneille, Désert, & Francard, 2003). Finally, Belgians are generally found to identify less than French with their linguistic ingroup. As a set, these results lend credence to the existence of derogatory endo-stereotypes among Belgians with respect to linguistic competence.

Identification with the linguistic community and linguistic skills

We expected Belgian respondents to identify no more and perhaps even less with their linguistic ingroup than French respondents (Hypothesis 1a). Also, we predicted that Belgian respondents and French respondents alike would see the linguistic skills of Belgians to be lower than the linguistic skills of the French (Hypothesis 1b). These predictions condition our investigation of the main prediction of this research endeavor, namely that we would see a compensation pattern emerge in the judgments of the two groups on general evaluations of competence and warmth.

Compensation at the mean group judgment level

First, whereas the French should be attributed more competence than Belgians, the reverse should hold for warmth (Hypothesis 2a). Second, *both* Belgian and French participants should attribute more competence but less warmth to the French than to Belgians (Hypothesis 2b). Third, although participants of both groups may converge in their perceptions of the characteristics associated with each group, they may be keen to exacerbate the intergroup difference on the dimension that they most readily associate with their group. A form of *overcompensation* would thus be observed (Hypothesis 2c). Fourth, we expect meta-stereotypes held by each group to converge with the endo-stereotypes and exo-stereotypes observed within these two groups. For instance, it is likely that the linguistic skills that the members of each group thought were attributed to them by the other group would corroborate the idea of the superiority of the French over Belgians (Hypothesis 2d). Also, whereas Belgian respondents would think that the French attribute more warmth than competence to Belgians, French respondents would think that Belgians attribute more competence than warmth to the French (Hypothesis 2e).

The compensation hypothesis at the correlation level

As far as we know, no work has yet addressed the issue of compensation by examining the relationships between the endo-, exo-, and meta-stereotypes at the level of individual respondents. One prediction was that participants would think that the members of the other group shared their own views about themselves (Hypothesis 3).

We also saw a number of interesting possibilities as far as the low-status individuals are concerned. First, the more low-status individuals see their group as low in competence the more they may see their group as high on warmth (Hypothesis 4a). Second, the more low-status individuals see their group as lower than the high-status group in competence the more they may see their group as higher than the high-status group on warmth (Hypothesis 4b). Third, the more low-status individuals see their group as more warm than competent the more they may see the high-status group as more competent than warm (Hypothesis 4c). Fourth, meta-stereotypic perceptions may also be of relevance in this context. Specifically, the more low-status individuals think they are perceived

as low in competence, the more they may see their group as high on warmth (Hypothesis 4d).

Another set of correlations was concerned with the high-status group members. Specifically, the more the members of the high-status group perceive the low-status group as warm the more they may perceive themselves as competent (Hypothesis 5a) or the more they may think that they are seen this way by the low-status group members (Hypothesis 5b). One would also expect the self-attributed warmth relative to competence among the high-status group members to be linked to the tendency to see the low-status group as more warm than competent (Hypothesis 5c). As can be seen, the latter set of hypotheses addressed the issue of compensation as it is actualized by the high-status group members.

Yet another way to examine this issue is to look at the representations of Belgians and French in each group of respondents as a function of their evaluations of the linguistic skills of both groups (Hypothesis 6).

Method

Participants and design Altogether, 531 participants took part in Study 1 in an anonymous way. A total of 214 participants were contacted in France (Clermont-Ferrand). In Belgium, the 317 participants were from Wallonia, the French-speaking region of Belgium, or Brussels, a bilingual but predominantly French-speaking region. Participants were approached by an experimenter who was a French-speaking Belgian in Belgium, or a French person in France, and asked to complete a questionnaire about their impressions on different aspects related to the French-speaking people and the Francophone world. This was done either in the context of small classes or in libraries. The data for 27 respondents were excluded from the analyses because these participants were not native French-speakers or were not the appropriate nationality. As a result, the data for 299 Belgians (41.81% females and 58.19% males) and 205 French (30.73% females and 69.27% males) remained for the analyses. Participants' mean age was 22.90 (SD = 5.60) in Belgium and 22.92 (SD = 5.10) in France.

Materials The questionnaire included two major sets of measures: ingroup identification and stereotypes (endo-, exo-, and meta-stereotypes). First, participants completed ingroup identification measures loosely inspired by Ellemers, Kortekaas, and Ouwerkerk (1999). Participants were asked to report their agreement with 15 ingroup identification statements on scales ranging from 1 (= *do not agree at all*) to 9 (= *strongly agree*).[2] The 15 identification items were submitted to a principal component analysis. Three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 emerged explaining a total of 58% of the variance. Because our prime interest resided in a global measure of identification, we decided to use all 15 items to compute an identification score (Cronbach's alpha = .86).

Second, participants were asked to complete a number of judgments reflecting their perceptions of the degree to which ingroup (endo-stereotypes) and outgroup members (exo-stereotypes) possessed stereotypic attributes. They had to indicate their impressions of the ingroup (versus outgroup) members and then their impressions of the outgroup (versus ingroup) members, using scales ranging from 1 (= *do not agree at all*) to 9 (= *strongly agree*). Next, participants were asked to give their impressions of the way they thought their own group was being seen by members of the outgroup ('meta-stereotypes').

The attributes used in the study were taken from classical language attitudes studies (Carranza & Ryan, 1975; Lambert et al., 1960) and sociolinguistic research (Francard, Geron, & Wilmet, 1993) and concerned three dimensions: linguistic skills (16 items), competence (10 items), and warmth (10 items). The linguistic skills items were: *difficulty in finding words*; *easily recognizable through its form*; *badly structured speech*; *unfaithful toward the standard form*; *rich vocabulary*; *pleasant to listen to*; *slow flow*; *refined*; *verbal skills*; *writing skills*; *simple syntax*; *correct way of speaking*; *juicy words*; *original expressions*; *incomprehensible expressions*; *incorrect words*. The competence items were: *not self-confident*; *ambitious*; *able to manage people*; *cultured*; *narcissistic*; *intelligent*; *dishonest*; *prestigious*; *professionally incompetent*; *serious*. The warmth items were: *cold*;

welcoming; *friendly*; *generous*; *humorous*; *introverted*; *malicious*; *impolite*; *sincere*; *sad*. These 36 items were presented three times, once to measure endo-stereotypes, once to assess exo-stereotypes, and once to tap meta-stereotypes. For each dimension (linguistic skills, competence, warmth), the items were presented in a different order so as to avoid automatic sets of responses.

Because the linguistic skills scale was essentially an exploratory one, we submitted the ratings for the Belgian targets and for the French targets to separate principal component analyses (PCA). These analyses revealed the presence of the same seven items loading very strongly on the first factor (> .60). Additional PCAs using only these seven items for the Belgian and the French targets confirmed the presence of one factor in each case, accounting for 52.66% and 52.85% of the variance for the Belgian and the French targets, respectively. The seven items were used to compute one general index of linguistic skills for the Belgian (Cronbach's alpha = .85) and one for the French targets (Cronbach's alpha = .85).[3]

We wanted to make sure that the items comprising the competence and warmth scales were not overly related. To this end, we submitted the 20 ratings of the Belgian targets to a PCA. Four factors had an eigenvalue greater than 1 and accounted for, respectively, 25%, 20%, 8%, and 5% of the total variance. An oblimin rotation revealed that whereas the first factor comprised all 5 positive warmth items along with 1 positive competence item, the third factor grouped the positive competence items. Most negatively worded items from both scales loaded on the second factor. Similarly, the 20 ratings for the French targets were submitted to a PCA. Again, four factors had eigenvalues greater than 1, explaining, respectively, 24%, 17%, 9%, and 6% of the total variance. An oblimin rotation showed that roughly the same factors emerged, only in a different order. This time, most of the negatively worded items, whether they concerned warmth or competence, loaded on the first factor. Whereas the second factor comprised all 6 positive competence items, the 5 positive warmth items loaded on the third factor. Along with a series of correlational analyses, these PCA analyses suggested that the positive portions of the two scales were more distinct from each other than the negative ones. Because our interest was in the compensation pattern involving a distinction between competence and warmth, we decided to restrict our analyses to the two positive scales.

Next, we submitted the 10 competence ratings of the Belgian targets and the 10 competence ratings of the French targets to separate PCAs. These analyses revealed the presence of the same six positive items loading very strongly on the first factor (> .60).[4] We then ran additional PCAs on the six items separately for the Belgian and the French targets and found only one factor with eigenvalue greater than 1 in each case. The first factor accounted for 60% in the case of the Belgian targets and 57% of the variance in the case of the French targets. We used these items to compute one index of competence for the Belgian targets (Cronbach's alpha = .82) and one for the French targets (Cronbach's alpha = .80).

We then submitted the ratings given on the 10 warmth items for the Belgian targets and those given on the 10 warmth items for the French targets to separate PCAs. These analyses revealed the presence of the same 5 positive warmth items loading very strongly on the first factor (> .60).[5] Additional PCAs on the 5 items separately for the Belgian and the French targets indicated the presence of only one factor with an eigenvalue greater than 1 in each case. The first factor accounted for 53% and 50% of the variance in the case of the Belgian and French targets, respectively. We therefore decided to rely on these items to compute one index of warmth for the Belgian targets (Cronbach's alpha = .84) and one for the French targets (Cronbach's alpha = .81).[6]

The questionnaire ended with sociodemographic questions regarding age, sex, nationality, country, native language (also of the mother and father if different), and studies (level and type). After completion of the questionnaire, participants were thanked for their participation, debriefed, and dismissed.

Results

Study 1 involved a 2 (Judge: Belgian vs. French) × 2 (Target: Belgian vs. French) × 2 (Order of Presentation: Judge's ingroup first vs. Judge's outgroup first) × 3 (Domain: Linguistic skills vs. Competence vs. Warmth) design with the first three factors varying between participants and the last one varying within participants. Because we found no impact of the order of presentation of the target group in the questionnaire, this factor was dropped from all analyses.

Ingroup identification Consistent with Hypothesis 1a, Belgian respondents (M = 5.44, SD = 1.27) identified significantly less with their ingroup than French respondents (M = 5.69, SD = 1.22) ($t(482) = 2.12$, $p < .03$, $\eta^2 = .01$).

Linguistic stereotypes We submitted the index of linguistic skills to a 2 (Judge: Belgian vs. French) × 2 (Target: Belgian vs. French) mixed-model analysis of variance (ANOVA) with the first factor varying between participants and the second varying within them. This analysis revealed the presence of a significant Judge main effect ($F(1, 490) = 5.06$, $p < .03$, $\eta^2 = .01$), such that Belgian respondents (M = 5.24) rated the linguistic skills of the targets as being higher than French respondents (M = 5.03). More importantly, there was also a very significant Target main effect ($F(1, 490) = 56.83$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .10$). Clearly, the French (M = 5.42) were judged to be more linguistically skilled than Belgians (M = 4.85). This pattern provides support to Hypothesis 1b.

Competence and warmth stereotypes We submitted the indices of competence and warmth to a 2 (Judge: Belgian vs. French) × 2 (Target: Belgian vs. French) × 2 (Domain: Competence vs. Warmth) mixed-model ANOVA with the first factor varying between participants and the second and third factors varying within them. A significant Domain effect ($F(1, 481) = 54.03$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .10$) showed that ratings were globally higher on warmth (M = 5.54) than on competence (M = 5.24). We also found a significant Target effect ($F(1, 481) = 7.30$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .01$), indicating that Belgians (M = 5.46) were given higher ratings than the French (M = 5.32). This effect was qualified by a significant Target by Judge interaction ($F(1, 481) = 22.77$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .05$). Closer inspection of the data revealed that Belgian judges gave higher ratings to Belgians (M = 5.61) than to the French (M = 5.23) ($t(293) = 6.52$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .13$). The opposite pattern emerged for the French judges although this difference was not significant ($t(188) = 1.19$, *ns*).

More importantly, and in line with Hypothesis 2a, there was a highly significant Target by Domain interaction ($F(1, 481) = 290.61$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .38$). Belgian targets were attributed more warmth (M = 5.96) than French targets (M = 5.12) ($t(481) = 11.78$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .22$). In contrast, Belgian targets were attributed less competence (M = 4.96) than French targets (M = 5.52) ($t(481) = 9.45$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .16$). Interestingly, there was also a significant three-way interaction ($F(1, 481) = 6.97$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .01$). As can be seen in Figure 1, this interaction is due to the fact that the warmth and, to a certain extent, the competence of the two target groups was not judged similarly by both groups of judges. Indeed, Belgian judges differentiated the warmth of Belgians and French more (*Dif* = 1.20) than did French judges (*Dif* = 0.49) ($F(1, 481) = 24.52$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .05$). In contrast, French judges discriminated the competence of Belgians and French more than did Belgian judges ($F(1, 481) = 5.20$, $p < .03$, $\eta^2 = .01$). This pattern of results supports both Hypothesis 2b and, importantly, the more subtle Hypothesis 2c.

Linguistic meta-stereotypes We computed participants' meta-stereotypes about linguistic skills using the same items as the ones used for the stereotypes. We thus submitted the scores pertaining to how participants thought the other group saw their linguistic skills to a one-way ANOVA with Judge (Belgians vs. French) as the between-subjects variable. There was a very significant Judge effect ($F(1, 490) = 144.02$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .23$). Confirming the pattern found in the stereotypes and supporting Hypothesis 2d, the linguistic skills that Belgian respondents thought were attributed to them by the French

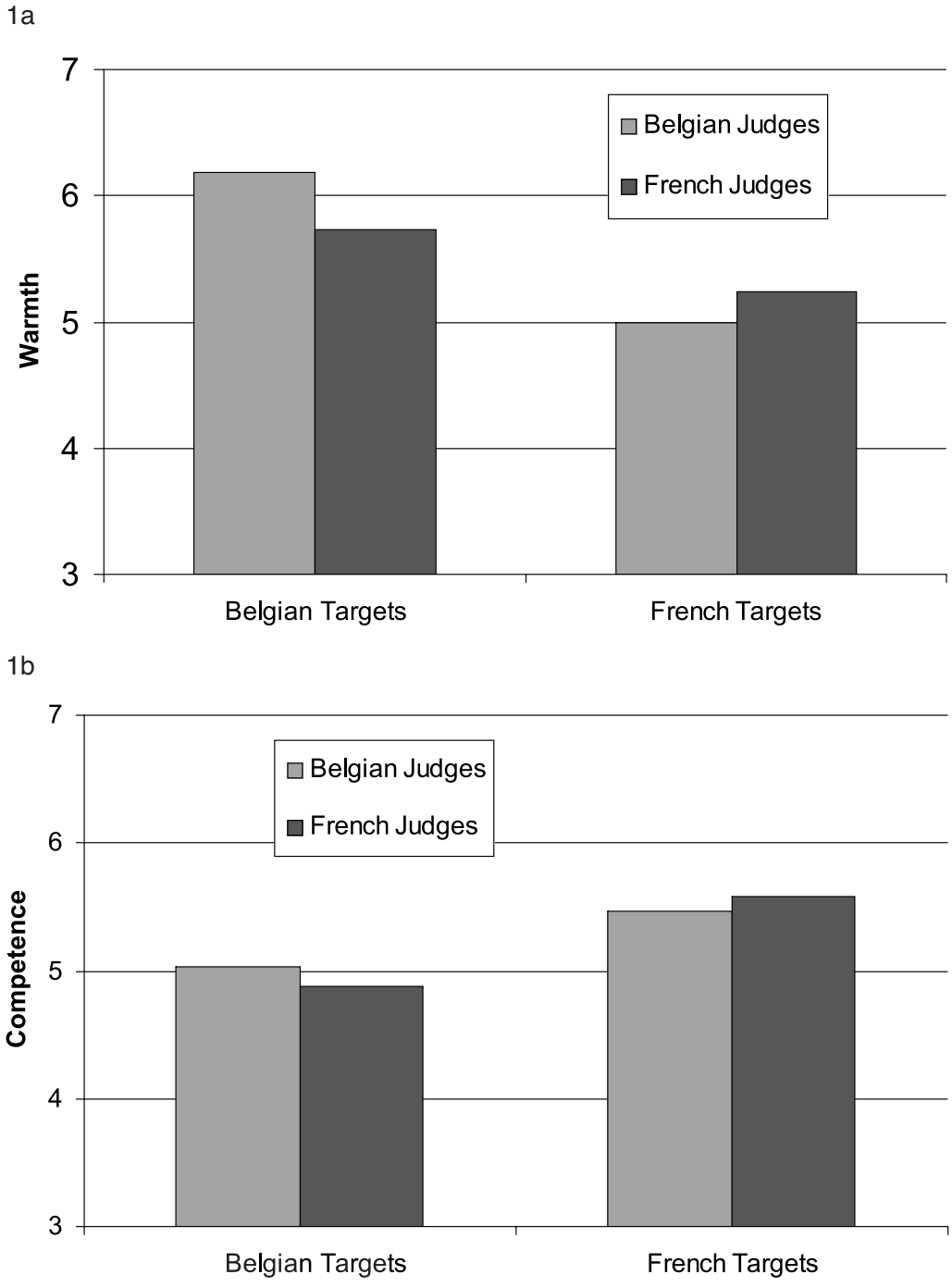

Figure 1. Evaluation of warmth (1a) and competence (1b) as a function of target and judge (Study 1).

were lower (M = 4.09) than the linguistic skills that French respondents thought were attributed to them by the Belgians (M = 5.53).

Competence and warmth meta-stereotypes Using the same items as the ones used for the stereotypes, we then submitted participants' meta-stereotypes about the social and intellectual competences to a 2 (Judge: Belgian vs. French) × 2 (Domain: Social vs. Intellectual) mixed-model ANOVA with the first variable varying between respondents and the second varying within respondents.

Both the main effect of Judge (F(1, 488) = 9.81, p < .002, η^2 = .02) and the main effect of Domain (F(1, 488) = 16.58, p < .01, η^2 = .03) were significant but were qualified by a very significant two-way interaction (F(1, 488) = 159.23, p < .01, η^2 = .25). In support of Hypothesis 2e, Belgian respondents thought that the French saw Belgians as more warm (M = 5.66) than competent (M = 4.31) (t(292) = 11.70, p < .01, η^2 = .32). In contrast, French respondents thought that the Belgians saw French people as less warm (M = 4.94) than competent (M = 5.64) (t(196) = 7.10, p < .01, η^2 = .20).

Correlational analyses To evaluate the degree of concordance between the endo- and the meta-stereotypes (Hypothesis 3), we correlated the two relevant scores for linguistic skills, competence, and warmth, in both samples separately. For Belgian respondents, all three correlations were significantly positive (r = .26, .37, .21, all ps < .01), for linguistic skills, competence, and warmth, respectively. For the French, only the latter two correlations were significantly positive (r = .60, .60, both ps < .01) for competence and warmth, respectively. The correlation regarding linguistic skills failed to reach significance (r = .02).

We then examined the ratings from the Belgian sample, i.e. the low-status group, in order to uncover potential evidence in support of the compensation hypothesis. In contrast to Hypothesis 4a, the correlation between the endo-stereotype of competence and the endo-stereotype of warmth was positive (r(296) = .43, p < .01). Next, we examined how the perceived difference in competence between the Belgian and French targets was related to their perceived difference in warmth. Again, contrary to Hypothesis 4b, this correlation was not significant (r(294) = .08, *ns*). We then examined how the perceived difference between competence and warmth for the Belgian targets was related to the perceived difference between competence and warmth for the French targets. Contrary to Hypothesis 4c, no significant correlation emerged there either (r(294) = –.07, *ns*). Turning to correlations involving meta-stereotypes, our data reveal that the extent to which Belgian respondents thought that the French saw them as competent was unrelated to the way they saw themselves as warm (r(292) = .09, *ns*). Thus, no support was obtained for Hypothesis 4d.

Next, we investigated a series of correlations among the French respondents, i.e. the high-status group. First, we found that the perception of warmth of the low-status group by the members of the high-status group was indeed related to the perception by the latter respondents that they are themselves competent (r(195) = .40, p < .01 (Hypothesis 5a), or seen this way by the members of the low-status group (r(194) = .47, p < .01) (Hypothesis 5b). We also examined the self-attributed warmth relative to competence among the members of the high-status group as it related to the tendency to see the members of the low-status group as more warm than competent (Hypothesis 5c). This relation failed to reach significance (r(189) = .05, *ns*).

Finally, we looked at how Belgian versus French respondents evaluated the linguistic skills of both groups and whether this was linked to their representations of the target groups as being more warm than competent (Hypothesis 6). Specifically, we correlated the perceived difference for the linguistic skills of the Belgian and French targets as it was reported by our Belgian respondents with these respondents' differential evaluation of warmth and competence of the Belgian targets on the one hand and of the French targets on the other. Whereas the first correlation was marginally negative (r(291) = –.11, p < .06), the second was marginally positive (r(291) = .10, p < .08). No significant correlations emerged when we

looked at the same relations among the French respondents.

Identification and stereotypic representations For exploratory purposes, we also examined group identification and how it related to the stereotypic perceptions of each one of the two groups. Identification among the Belgian respondents was related to their representation of Belgians as being more warm than competent ($r(287) = .17$, $p < .01$), but not to the perception of the French as being less warm than competent ($r(287) = -.06$, *ns*). Looking at the differences from another perspective, group identification among the Belgian respondents was related to the differential perception, i.e. the perceived superiority, of Belgians relative to the French on warmth ($r(287) = .21$, $p < .01$), but not to the differential perception, i.e. the perceived superiority, of Belgians relative to the French on competence ($r(287) = .03$, *ns*). Turning to the French respondents, there was no relation between their identification and their representations of Belgians or French as being more warm than competent.

Discussion

In line with expectations, French respondents were more identified with their group than were Belgian respondents. Our data also confirmed the negative views held about the linguistic skills of Belgian speakers of French: both Belgian and French respondents reported that they perceived the French to be better than Belgians in the practice of French language. This finding is consistent with previous work reported in the sociolinguistic (e.g. Francard, 1999) and social psychological literature (e.g. Provost et al., 2003). Interestingly, Study 1 provided evidence that these perceptions generalize to the meta-stereotype level. Belgian respondents reported that they thought the French would perceive Belgians as being worse than French people in the practice of French, and French respondents reported that they thought Belgians would perceive French people as being better than Belgians in the practice of French.

The negative views held and shared about the respective linguistic skills of Belgians and French allowed us to test for the presence of compensation in the present context. A most interesting picture emerged when we analyzed the characteristics attributed to the two target groups by our two groups of judges. Clearly, the findings appear quite consistent with the compensation hypothesis. Belgian targets were attributed more warmth than French targets, whereas Belgian targets were attributed less competence than French targets. This was globally true within both groups of judges, suggesting a fair degree of social consensus with respect to the characteristics attached to these two groups.

As it turns out, the ratings also provided evidence for the presence of some level of overcompensation. Specifically, French respondents differentiated their group from the outgroup more on competence than warmth. Conversely, Belgian respondents differentiated their group from the outgroup more on warmth than competence. These findings provide support for the view that intergroup differentiation is most likely to operate on those dimensions that are most relevant for the group identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

At the within-respondent correlational level, however, the evidence proved much less supportive. On a series of judgments, we failed to observe the pattern expected on the basis of compensation. Worse, some relations proved contrary to hypotheses. For instance, the more Belgian respondents thought that the members of their group are warm, the more they also thought that the members of their group are competent. Although such a pattern may be seen as indicative of social competition—low-status group members who report having a positive view of their ingroup in one domain indicate that their ingroup is also positive in the other domain—it is equally compatible with social mobility—low-status group members who have a negative view of their group in one domain generalize this to the other domain. Before more research is conducted on this specific point, parsimony would caution us to interpret this pattern in terms of a simple halo effect.

On a more optimistic note, our data revealed the expected links between the differential

judgments of both target groups on their linguistic skills and the evaluation of Belgians as being more warm than competent. Interestingly, this was true only among Belgian respondents. At the same time, however, ingroup identification was not related to the Belgian respondents' tendency to negatively differentiate their group on a dimension on which they displayed a deficit (i.e. competence).

As much as this, the present study also showed that respondents' endo-stereotypes and meta-stereotypes closely matched each other. This means that for both Belgians and French, the way the respondents' group is thought to be perceived by the members of the other group converged with these respondents' perceptions about their own group.

Overall, Study 1 suggests that there was a fair level of consensus in the way the members of the two groups perceive each other. Whereas Belgians were seen as more warm than competent, the French were seen as more competent than warm. In addition, our data indicate that respondents thought that the other group held the same views of their group as themselves. As a matter of fact, they were correct to think so. One obvious question that follows is the extent to which the representations of these two groups are also shared by a third group of respondents or are better seen as the consequence of some motivated form of social creativity. We addressed this issue in Study 2.

Study 2

The aim of Study 2 was to evaluate the extent to which the perceptions of both groups evidenced in Study 1 were confirmed by a third party. To this end, we decided to collect the same information among French-speaking Swiss respondents. One question associated with compensation is the extent to which only the people involved in the intergroup relation embrace a compensatory view of the groups in presence. French-speaking Swiss may be seen as a less prestigious group of speakers than French-speakers from France (e.g. Francard, 2001) but they are clearly not concerned as targets of our rating scales.

To the extent that a difference in linguistic skills and a compensation pattern are also found to characterize Belgians and French in the responses of Swiss respondents, one would be tempted to conclude that even people who are not themselves involved in the specific intergroup comparison adopt a contrasted view of these two groups. At the very least, such a concordance of opinion would suggest that a substantial degree of social validation is achieved regarding the dimensions attributed to these two groups. Such a finding would also lend credibility to the existence of some kernel of truth by which these two groups truly differ on the dimensions of linguistic skills, competence, and warmth.

In contrast, it may be that Swiss respondents see much less difference in linguistic skills between Belgians and French. Similarly, the compensation pattern may be much less marked in the responses of these outsiders than in the answers of Belgian and French respondents. If they were borne out, such findings would be indicative of a tendency of group members who are directly concerned by the comparison to exacerbate differences that are in fact much smaller if not entirely absent in reality. This conclusion would further be validated if Swiss respondents also acknowledge the existence of strong meta-stereotypes among the members of these two groups.

Method

Participants and procedure Our Swiss participants ($N = 70$) were all students attending the University of Lausanne, an institution located in the French-speaking area of Switzerland. They were approached by a female surveyor whose accent made very clear that she was a Swiss French-speaker herself. The average age of participants was 22.8 years, roughly the same age as our Belgian and French respondents in Study 1. The data for 20 participants were not included in the analysis because their nationality was not Swiss, their native language was not French, or because the city they lived in was not predominantly French-speaking.

The study involved a 2 (Target: Belgians vs. French) $\times$ 3 (Domain: Linguistic skills vs.

Competence vs. Warmth) design with both factors varying within participants. The same procedure and materials were used as in Study 1. A series of factor analyses confirmed that the same linguistic, competence, and warmth items could be used to compute the relevant stereotypes and meta-stereotypes (all Cronbach's alphas > .89).

Results

Linguistic stereotypes We submitted the linguistic stereotypes to a 2 (Target: Belgian vs. French) repeated measures ANOVA. Even if the means were in the direction of a superiority among the French, Swiss respondents rated the French (M = 5.21) to be no more skilled than Belgians (M = 4.88) in the practice of French ($F(1, 48) = 2.31$, $p > .13$).

Competence and warmth stereotypes Using the competence and warmth scores given to Belgians and French, we conducted a 2 (Target: Belgian vs. French) × 2 (Domain: Competence vs. Warmth) repeated measures ANOVA. This analysis first revealed the presence of a significant Domain main effect ($F(1, 48) = 17.74$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .27$), indicating that the ratings given by our respondents were globally higher on warmth (M = 5.04) than on competence (M = 4.64). The only other effect was a significant Target by Domain interaction ($F(1, 48) = 11.73$, $p < .002$, $\eta^2 = .20$). Belgian targets were attributed more warmth (M = 5.25) than French targets (M = 4.83), $t(48) = 2.57$, $p < .02$, $\eta^2 = .01$). In contrast, Belgian targets were apparently associated with less competence (M = 4.54) than French targets (M = 4.75), although this difference failed to reach a conventional level of significance ($t(48) = 1.31$, *ns*).

Linguistic meta-stereotypes We submitted the linguistic meta-stereotypes, i.e. how Swiss respondents believed each group thought the other group evaluated their linguistic skills, to a repeated measures ANOVA with Target (Belgian vs. French) as the independent variable. The Target effect was significant ($F(1, 45) = 10.30$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .19$). According to our Swiss respondents, Belgians think that the French are attributing less linguistic skills to Belgians (M = 4.40) than the French think Belgians are attributing linguistic skills to the French (M = 5.03).

Competence and warmth meta-stereotypes Swiss respondents' meta-stereotypes of competence and warmth were submitted to a 2 (Target: Belgian vs. French) × 2 (Domain: Competence vs. Warmth) repeated measures ANOVA. This analysis revealed the presence of a marginally significant main effect of Domain ($F(1, 45) = 3.47$, $p < .07$, $\eta^2 = .07$), that was qualified by a two-way interaction ($F(1, 45) = 37.82$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .46$). In the eyes of our Swiss respondents, Belgians think that the French associate them more with warmth (M = 5.56) than competence (M = 4.45) ($t(48) = 6.40$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .46$). In contrast, Swiss respondents believed that the French think that Belgians attribute to them more competence (M = 5.31) than warmth (M = 4.56) ($t(45) = 4.23$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .28$).

Comparisons between insiders (Belgian or French) and outsiders (Swiss) First, we compared the magnitude of the compensation pattern in the stereotypes and in the meta-stereotypes of our Swiss respondents by means of a 2 (Target: Belgian vs. French) × 2 (Domain: Competence vs. Warmth) × 2 (Judgment: Stereotype vs. Meta-stereotypes) repeated measures ANOVA. As expected, the compensation pattern that the Swiss thought resided in the meta-stereotypes of Belgians and French about each other was stronger than in their own stereotypic judgments ($F(1, 45) = 19.43$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .30$) (see Figure 2).

In order to compare the magnitude of the compensation pattern among Swiss respondents versus the members of the two target groups, we then conducted a 3 (Judge: Belgian vs. French vs. Swiss) × 2 (Target: Belgian vs. French) × 2 (Domain: Competence vs. Warmth) mixed-model ANOVA with the first factor varying between participants and the last ones varying within them. We ran the analysis using an a priori contrast, i.e. Perceiver, opposing Swiss respondents as *outsiders* on the one

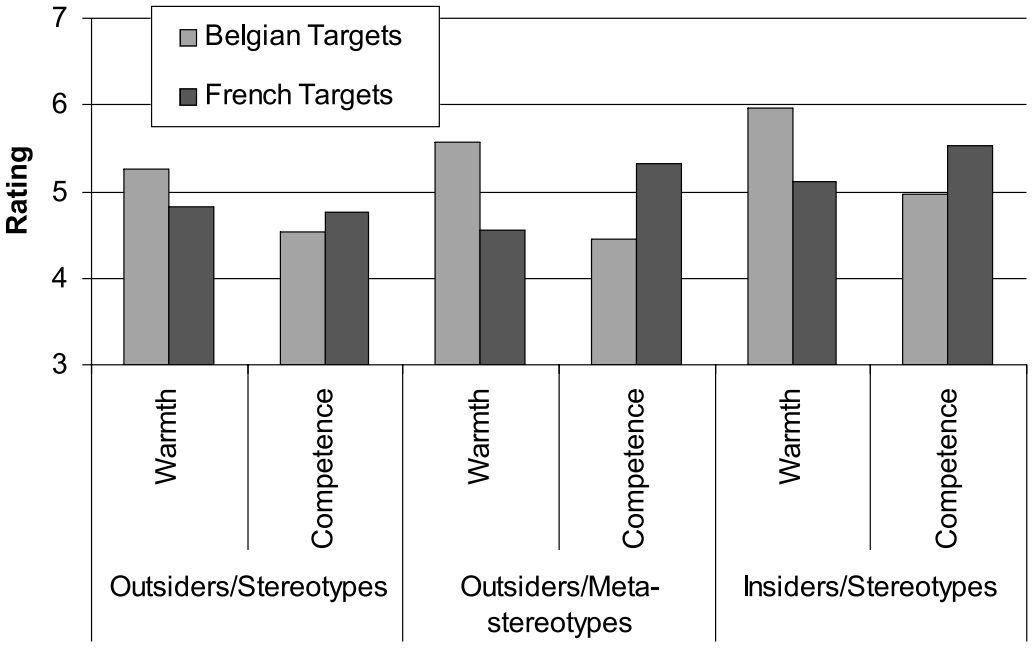

Figure 2. Evaluation of warmth and competence as a function of target, perceiver, and type of judgment (Study 2).

hand and Belgian and French respondents as *insiders* on the other. A significant Perceiver effect ($F(1, 529) = 14.04$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .03$) indicated that ratings given by respondents were globally lower when they were outsiders ($M = 4.84$) rather than insiders ($M = 5.40$). More importantly, and in line with the motivation hypothesis, the only other significant effect involving Perceiver was the three-way interaction with Target and Domain ($F(1, 529) = 8.82$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .02$). As shown in Figure 2, this effect signals that the compensation pattern was less marked in outsiders' stereotypes than in insiders' stereotypes.

Finally, we compared the strength of compensation in the stereotypes of the insiders and in the meta-stereotypes of our Swiss respondents using the same 3 (Judge: Belgian vs. French vs. Swiss) × 2 (Target: Belgian vs. French) × 2 (Domain: Competence vs. Warmth) mixed-model ANOVA. This time, our interest focused on the a priori contrast, i.e. Perceiver, opposing Swiss respondents as outsiders expressing their meta-stereotypes on the one hand and Belgian and French respondents as insiders expressing their stereotypes on the other. This analysis revealed the presence of a significant Perceiver effect ($F(1, 526) = 8.48$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .02$), confirming that the stereotypes reported by insiders were globally higher ($M = 5.40$) than the meta-stereotypes of outsiders ($M = 4.97$). Importantly, the three-way interaction with Perceiver, Target, and Domain ($F(1, 526) = 2.70$, *ns*) now failed to reach a conventional level of significance, suggesting that the compensation pattern was of similar magnitude whether examined in the context of insiders' stereotypes or outsiders' meta-stereotypes.

Discussion

The findings obtained in our Swiss sample are most interesting indeed. First of all, Swiss respondents do not see any strong difference in linguistic skills between Belgians and French.

Also, although their stereotypic judgments are not unlike those expressed by Belgians and French themselves, i.e. insiders, the Swiss clearly show a much weaker tendency to single out Belgians as warmer than French and they do not see Belgians as less competent than the French. At the same time, the Swiss seem to be aware of the compensation pattern that rules stereotypic judgments of insiders about each other. Indeed, as can be seen in the meta-stereotypes of our Swiss respondents, these outsiders express judgments that are quite consistent with those evidenced among our French and Belgian respondents. In other words, Swiss respondents manifest an impressive level of awareness regarding the characteristics that best characterize each one of the two target groups in the eyes of the insiders. Clearly, our Swiss respondents know how the French think they are seen by Belgians and vice versa.

General discussion

Are members of powerful, prestigious, or otherwise dominant groups generally seen as lacking solidarity, friendliness, or generosity? Linking the classic work on the characterization of individual speakers (Bradac et al., 2001; Ryan & Giles, 1982) as well as research conducted by ELIT theorists (see Giles & Coupland, 1991) to more recent efforts related to stereotyping of entire social groups guided by SCM (Fiske et al., 2002; Glick & Fiske, 2001; see also Phalet & Poppe, 1997), the present set of studies examined intergroup characterizations in the context of two groups which were thought to occupy different levels of a hierarchy in terms of linguistic skills, namely French-speaking Belgians and the French. Thanks to the use of a full-crossed design, we were able to thoroughly examine the endo-, exo-, and meta-stereotypes of the members of these two groups. We hypothesized that linguistic skills were more readily attributed to French than to French-speaking Belgians. Also, we expected that Belgian respondents would identify less with their linguistic ingroup than French respondents. More importantly, we predicted that the members of the high-status group would be seen as possessing high levels of competence but low levels of warmth. Conversely, we expected that the members of the low-status group would be associated with low levels of competence but high levels of warmth.

As expected, Belgians identified less with their ingroup than the French. Also confirming a series of hints regarding the existence of a subjective linguistic hierarchy between these two groups, Belgians generally received lower ratings than the French on linguistic skills. As it happens, both standard (French) and non-standard (Belgians) respondents agreed with the idea that Belgians are less skilled than the French in the practice of French. In other words, the present research suggests the existence of a subjectively unambiguous hierarchy among these two groups of Francophones, a finding that is consistent with suggestions made by sociolinguists (e.g. Francard, 1999).

Having established that there exists a subjective hierarchy between our groups as far as linguistic skills are concerned, the next step was to examine the more general representations held of about members of these groups. On this front, our results nicely extend to group perception and stereotyping the earlier findings emanating from studies exploring the role of language in the prediction of status and solidarity (see Giles & Coupland, 1991). This line of work revealed that an individual speaker is more likely to be attributed competence and status, but less likely to be attributed warmth and solidarity, when using a standard rather than a non-standard variety of language. Extending these findings at the level of perceptions of groups, the present data confirm that whereas a group of standard speakers is readily associated with competence, a group of non-standard speakers is associated with warmth. Of importance, this pattern emerged in both groups of judges.

One intriguing issue concerns the emergence of ingroup favoritism in the presence of a compensation pattern. Although respondents may well concede the existence of superiority on some dimension among outgroup members, one could still observe that the differentiation in favor of the ingroup is more marked on some

relevant dimension. Our data regarding the endo- and exo-stereotypes of these two groups indeed suggest that group members exacerbate the distinction between the two groups on the dimension that seems to favor the ingroup. Less discrimination was observed in the domain which has the outgroup occupy the highest position in the hierarchy. Such a clear-cut pattern of stereotypic characterizations strongly corroborates a series of theoretical propositions made by social identity theorists (Mummendey & Schreiber, 1983; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and points to the presence of motivational concerns being at work in the characterization of the groups.

Another fascinating piece of evidence concerns the respondents' meta-stereotypes. Interestingly, non-standard speakers thought that standard speakers saw them as being not only less linguistically skilled but also less competent than warm. This pattern of results was strictly mirrored in the case of standard speakers. That is, standard speakers thought that non-standard speakers saw them as being more linguistically skilled and more competent than warm. This seems to indicate that the people involved in the specific intergroup setting do not only demonstrate consensus in terms of their judgment of the two groups but are in fact quite accurate in their beliefs regarding the characterization of their ingroup in the eyes of the outgroup members.

Clearly, however, if the above findings pertaining to the average characterizations of group members corroborate both the ELIT and the SCM, it is fair to say that the level of support coming from the correlational data was not impressive. All in all, future research should clarify the exact scope of these theoretical perspectives when it comes to within-respondent correlational evidence. The use of more controlled experimental settings should also help clarify the success rate of these theories in predicting respondents' reactions. In our opinion, research efforts should be primarily directed at examining the impact of those parameters deemed important by ELIT—such as ethnolinguistic vitality, legitimacy of status differential, and permeability of group boundaries—and SCM—such as status differential and interdependence between the groups—in the shaping of intergroup appraisals, emotions, and behavior.

One goal of the present studies concerned the motivational underpinning of the compensation pattern. Is it the case that Belgians and the French are showing compensation in their judgments because this allows them to deal with the difficult reality that one group affirms its superiority in some domain? Is it a manifestation of social creativity as predicted by ELIT and SCM or does it reflect the actual nature of the groups? To be sure, the ambivalent perceptions emerged not only among the members of the groups directly concerned by the comparison, i.e. Belgians and French, but also to some extent in the ratings of a group of external observers, i.e. Swiss. Perhaps the strongest evidence for this compensation pattern intruding in the judgments of outsiders was found in their meta-stereotypes. Admittedly, this means that the compensation pattern has been observed in each one of the three groups of participants involved in our two studies. Still, the perceptions of our Swiss respondents failed to support the idea of a strong hierarchy in terms linguistic skills. Pointing in the same direction, our data revealed that the compensation pattern was much weaker in the judgments of outsiders than in the judgments of the respondents directly involved in the comparison. There was even a clear indication that outsiders saw no difference in competence between the Belgians and the French.

Looking only at the data from our Belgian and French samples, it may thus seem as if these respondents were in fact sensitive to objective differences that exist between them. To be sure, the viability of this kernel of truth interpretation would be much stronger if external observers were to agree with the convictions conveyed by our Belgian and French respondents. An alternative view rests on the idea that stereotypes about Belgians and French are largely agreed upon by the members of these two groups but that the images of the two groups need not necessarily be shared by 'neutral' or otherwise uninvolved observers. Of

these two accounts, the latter, social influence account provides the most parsimonious explanation for the data collected among our Swiss respondents. Moreover, this interpretation dovetails nicely with our argument that compensation is the consequence of motivated perception: because our external observers are not directly involved in the comparison between the target groups, they failed to manifest the same fervor regarding the differences between the two groups as the one that was shown by respondents caught up in the comparison. Together, our two sets of data suggest that a kernel of truth interpretation ought to be questioned and that, instead, the most viable explanation of the compensation pattern among Belgians and French is a motivational one.

To conclude, the major question underlying this contribution concerned the existence of a compensation phenomenon between two social groups for which there exists a subjective hierarchy in terms of linguistic skills. Our results provide encouraging evidence for the idea that both low- and high-status group members display a tendency to compensate their negative reputation in some domain, i.e. their social shortcomings in the case of high-status groups or their intellectual limitations in the case of the low-status group, by associating more positive qualities on a largely independent dimension. Moreover, our data from uninvolved observers favor a motivational interpretation of this pattern. To be sure, this set of data represents only an initial attempt at evaluating the relevance of the compensation hypothesis in a full-crossed design. More work is needed to appreciate the merits of this approach in order to better understand the construction of stereotypes in intergroup settings.

Notes

1. It should be noted that a compensation pattern is not the sole prediction than can be made in the context of ELIT. As a matter of fact, there are at least three combinations that have been documented: mutual downgrading on status and solidarity variables (Lambert et al., 1965) and mutual asymmetry whereby both groups recognize that one group is higher on both status and solidarity (Lambert et al., 1960), and compensation. ELIT can be used to cast these various outcomes as examples of social competition, social mobility, and social creativity, respectively.
2. The identification items were: 1: *I think my group has little to be proud of*; 2: *I feel good about my group*; 3: *I have little respect for my group*; 4: *I would rather not tell that I belong to this group*; 5: *I am like other members of my group*; 6: *My group is an important reflection of who I am*; 7: *I dislike being a member of my group*; 8: *I would rather belong to another group*; 9: *I feel identified with my ingroup members*; 10: *I would say I am a French-speaking Belgian* (*versus a French person*); 11: *I feel close to my ingroup members*; 12: *Being part of my group positively contributes to the way I see myself*; 13: *I would like to continue to belong to my ingroup*; 14: *I claim responsibility for being a member of my group*; 15: *I feel affectively close to my ingroup members.*
3. These are items 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13 from the linguistic skills scale.
4. These are items 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10 from the competence scale.
5. These are items 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 from the warmth scale.
6. The details of the factor analyses and the scales can be obtained upon request from the corresponding author.

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